

What is claimed is:

1. A method for providing backup server support, comprising:
- operating a first server wherein the first server is capable of
- 5 communication with a network and is associated with a primary server address;
- maintaining a second server wherein the second server is capable
- of communication with the network, configured in parallel with the first server,
- and is associated with a monitor server address;
- signaling, using a first signal, the primary server address;
- 10 monitoring for a response to the first signal within a predetermined
- time period; and
- repeating the signaling step and the monitoring step until a time
- period elapses wherein the response is not received within the time period, and
- thereafter performing the step of booting the first server.
- 15 2. The method of claim 1 wherein the first server includes a first
- server memory and the second server includes a second server memory, and
- comprising the additional step of, after the signaling step is repeated a
- predetermined number of times, copying data from the first server memory to the
- second server memory.
- 20 3. The method of claim 1 comprising the additional step of, in
- conjunction with the booting of the first server, operating the second server.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein the operating step comprises providing server services to the network.

5. The method of claim 3 wherein the second operating step comprises providing server services to the network.

5 6. The method of claim 1 wherein the maintaining step comprises maintaining the second server in a backup mode so that the second server can be associated with the primary server address when a time period elapses wherein the response is not received within the time period.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein the primary server address is an  
10 Internet protocol address.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein the signaling step comprises pinging the primary server address.

9. The method of claim 1 wherein the response to the first signal in the time period is indicative of operation of the first server as the primary server,  
15 and an absence of the response to the first signal in the time period is indicative of primary server malfunction or inactivity.

10. The method of claim 1 comprising the additional steps of, in conjunction with the booting of the first server:

signaling, using a second signal, the monitor server address; and  
20 monitoring for a response to the second signal within a second time period.

11. The method of claim 10 wherein a response to the second signal is received within the secondary time period, and the second server is operated as a monitor server.

12. The method of claim 10 wherein a response to the second signal  
5 is not received within the second time period, and the second server is thereafter operated as a primary server.

13. A system for operating redundant computers comprising:  
a carrier containing computer program instructions thereon,  
wherein the instructions instruct a computer processor to perform the steps of:  
10 signaling, using a signal, a primary server address;  
monitoring for a response to the signal within a predetermined  
time period; and  
repeating the signaling step and the monitoring step until a time  
period elapses wherein the response is not received within the time period, and  
15 thereafter performing the step of booting a first server.

14. The system of claim 13 wherein the instructions also instruct the processor to perform the additional step of, after the signaling step is repeated a predetermined number of times, copying data from a first server memory to a second server memory.

20 15. The system of claim 13 wherein the instructions also instruct the processor to perform the additional step of, in conjunction with the booting of the

first server, operating a second server.

16. The system of claim 13 wherein the instructions also instruct the processor to maintain the second server in a backup mode so that operation of the second server can be provided when a time period elapses wherein the response  
5 is not received within the time period.

17. The system of claim 13 wherein the primary server address is an Internet protocol address.

18. The system of claim 13 wherein the response to the signal in the time period is indicative of primary server operation, and an absence of the  
10 response to the signal in the time period is indicative of primary server malfunction or inactivity.

19. The system of claim 13 further comprising:  
a first computing apparatus including a first memory, the first computer apparatus being communicatively connected to a network and  
15 corresponding to the primary server address;

a second computing apparatus including a second memory, the second computing apparatus in communication with the network, configured in parallel with the first computing apparatus, and having a secondary server address; and  
20 a processor.

20. A redundant computer system comprising:

a first computing apparatus communicatively connected to a network and corresponding to a primary server address;

a second computing apparatus in communication with the network and configured in parallel with the first computing apparatus, and associated with

5 monitor server address;

a means for signaling the primary server address;

a means for monitoring for a response to the signal within a predetermined time period; and

a means for repeating the signaling step and the monitoring step  
10 until a time period elapses wherein the response is not received within the time period; and a means for booting the first server.